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**JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.**

**LONDON:**  
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# JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

A

## Dramatic Poem.

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By M. J. CHAPMAN, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "BARBADOES, AND OTHER POEMS."

ὦ πάτερ, πάρειμί σοι,  
τούμὸν δὲ σῶμα τῆς ἐμῆς ὑπὲρ πάτρας  
θῦσαι δίδωμι' ἰκοῦσα πρὸς βασιλῆα Θεοῦ.

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LONDON:

JAMES FRASER, REGENT STREET.

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M.DCCC.XXXIV.

62.





SUCCESS only can justify an attempt of this kind; how I have succeeded it is not for me to determine. With more practice I hope to acquire more cunning on the instrument I have presumed to touch. It is my intention, should this attempt be successful, to write a trilogy on the houses of Saul and David; and to dramatise the history of Esther, and, perhaps, the book of Job. I have addressed myself in no irreverent spirit to these themes.

In the treatment of a Scripture subject, I have thought it but right, wherever I could, to make use of Scripture language and Syrian imagery.

The history is related in the 11th chapter of the book of Judges. Some persons have pretended that Jephtha's daughter was not sacrificed, and have attempted to explain the passage away, by supposing that she was devoted to celibacy. The sacred historian explicitly declares that Jephtha did with her according to his vow; and that vow was, "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering." He further states, that "it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephtha the Gileadite, four days in a year."

Josephus relates the history in the 9th

chapter of the 5th book of his Antiquities :

“ But before Jephtha took the field, he prayed to God in the most fervent manner to grant him success, and made a solemn vow, that, if he proved victorious, he would offer up to him, in sacrifice, the first living creature he should meet on his return to his family. . . .

“ The war being over, Jephtha returned to his family, when, lo ! instead of receiving that satisfaction he expected after so long an absence, a circumstance occurred that pierced him to the heart. On approaching his house, the first object that presented itself was his only daughter, who was flying with eager joy to receive and bid him welcome. When Jephtha saw his daughter, his soul almost sunk within him, and, for some time, he was unable to speak. Having a little recovered himself, he looked at her with tears trickling from his cheeks ; and, after blaming her for

her officiousness in coming to meet him, told her the vow he had made, by which he had obliged himself to offer her to God as a sacrifice. The innocent devotee did not appear the least alarmed at this melancholy intelligence, but with great coolness replied, that if the loss of her life would secure his honour, and the liberty of her country, she would willingly part with it. She only requested that he would indulge her with two months, that she might have an opportunity of taking a proper farewell of all her acquaintance; and that, after that time was expired, he might fulfil his vow. Her father granted her request; and, at the expiration of the two months, she was made a sacrifice, which was the consequence of the rash vow made by Jephtha, the fulfilment of which was conformable neither to law nor justice."

MAYNARD'S *Josephus*.

There are persons, however, who will presume to misconstrue and to interpret, after their own fashion, the plain language of Scripture, whenever it does violence to the imaginary character they had drawn for themselves of the Ineffable. They forget who has said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." "I form the light, and I create darkness; I make peace and create evil;" and yet we know that "the Lord is righteous in all his ways;" and on all occasions should we exclaim, though our understanding be darkened, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints!"

This Gileadite maiden appears to me to have been a type of the Propitiation. In the language of Solomon, she was "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." So also was that highly favoured one, the blessed among women, when the power of the Highest over-

shadowed her; and, behold! a virgin conceived and bore a Son; whereupon the Spring of Salvation welled out, and the fountain of waters was opened for the cleansing of the peoples.

It is said that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephtha;" and the natural inference from the whole narrative is, that he did not sin in the matter of his vow, and that his daughter became a sacrifice for the people at that time, as a type of the Wonderful.

Ever and anon, in the history of the church, we meet with the names of remarkable women, who, like the chaste-tree, spread sweetness around them, and were lovely in their lives; pearls of price, and blossoms of hope in times of doubt and danger; types, and signs, and revealings; instinct with graces, and filled with wisdom; whose memories skirt, at intervals, like lesser stars, the out-

line of times foregone, and who foreshew the coming of that glorious epoch, when the reign of justice shall be established upon the earth, and woman, as a consequence thereof, be restored to her original equality with man.

I may have failed in attempting to express the character of the Maid of Gilead; her gentleness and her devotion; her maidenly modesty and child-like simplicity, shadowing like a veil the beautiful features of pious Heroism; her willingness to die according to the very letter of her father's vow, "forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon;"—but at least a lovely vision has passed before mine eyes, and I have seen the lilies and the roses of Palestine, and a flower of exceeding beauty, Almah, the only one of her father—and am thankful.





**JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.**



## ARGUMENT.

JEPHTHA, chosen judge, is absent from his home to do battle against the children of Ammon. The Spirit of the Lord comes upon him, and he is thus marked out as the appointed instrument for the deliverance of his people. He makes a vow to offer as burnt-offering that living thing which shall first meet him out of the doors of his house, when he returns in peace from the Ammonites. The day of battle comes on; the Elders of Gilead, and the chorus of Gileadite girls, friends and companions of his daughter, are assembled at Mizpeh. They have on all hands an expectation that a great battle will be fought, and a great deliverance effected on that day. The chorus and Miriam sing praises and a hymn to the Giver of all good. Miriam, by the suggestions of her friends, and from some mysterious influence on her own mind, is induced to expect that her espousals are drawing near. The Elders, nothing doubting their deliverance, have some fears that Jephtha may be devoted. The first messenger reports the commencement of the battle, with the particulars preceding it. Adad gives a brief account of Jephtha's history. Miriam comes forth, under the shadowing of some preternatural mystery. The chorus think her vision apocalyptic; and presage her

marriage and high destiny. The second messenger reports the victory, and the circumstances attending it. The chorus sing the song of Moses. Jephtha is descried approaching. His daughter is the first living thing that meets him from his house, and thus becomes "his vow." She is not at all disheartened, but professes her willingness to be burnt-offering for him and her people. The nurse and chorus, remaining on the place, utter mingled lamentations and thanksgivings. The chorus close the action with a song in honour of the victor-victim.

## **The Persons.**

**JEPHTHA**, *Judge of Israel.*

**ADAD**, *an Elder of Gilead.*

**SECOND ELDER.**

**JARED.**

**ZEBUL.**

**MIRIAM**, *the Daughter of JEPHTHA.*

**NURSE.**

**CHORUS OF GILEADITE GIRLS.**

*Scene — before JEPHTHA'S House at Mizpeh.*

*Time — the day of the Victory over the Ammonites.*



## JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

---

MIRIAM, NURSE, CHORUS.

MIRIAM.

THE lingering night ! how slowly did it pass !  
And now the glorious day ! how beautiful !  
The morn is merry, and the valleys laugh ;  
Joy stands a-tiptoe on the dew-dropt trees ;  
The lily and the rose, sweet rivals ! shew  
Their blooming braveries ; the cedar-top  
Rustling trills with a living harmony.  
See ! how the innocent kids go frisking by,  
And with what joy sedate and measured pace  
That woolly counsellor leads forth his people.  
And yonder goes my hart — (remember, Nurse !  
How I did find him, when he was so high,



A tiny pining fawn, and how we thought  
Some lion had despoiled him of his dam,  
And how I fed him and did garland him  
Till he grew tall and proud, and fled away,  
Unkind one ! why I never yet could guess) —  
See ! how he bounds and clears the water-brook !  
My own ! my beautiful ! my gallant hart !  
Yonder into the thick of sheltering green  
He glancing glides, and like a dream is gone !  
The very grass enjoys the morwening,  
And each particular blade is diamonded  
With day-spring dew. The blue arch over us  
Looks inexpressible love ; and that bright orb  
Seems a benevolence instinct with life —  
How like a king he looks upon the world !  
I feel a voice within me, and must needs  
(Most exquisite impulse !) interpret it : —  
Break into joy, ye daughters of the land !  
For, lo ! the winter it is past, and gone  
The weltering rain ; the flowers are on the earth ;  
The happy birds enjoy their singing-time,

And in our land the turtle's voice is heard ;  
Already from the vine-leaf peeps the grape,  
And her green figs the fig-tree putteth forth.  
Break into joy, ye virgins, and proclaim  
The Giver of all good — the vital Spring  
Of his creation, who upon this day  
Weighs in his scales the Ammonites and us ;  
And will this day defeat the Ammonite,  
(The Voice assures me), and to Jephtha give  
The victory : to His name be the praise !

## CHORUS.

Hail, Father ! Father of the day !  
On bended knees we praise and pray ;  
We pray and praise — but know not how ;  
Teach us, O teach us, Thou !  
Hear us, O hear, Ancient of Days !  
Our praise is prayer — our prayer is praise.  
Upon our brethren bend from high  
The favour of a father's eye ;  
Upon our haughty foemen rain  
Dismay, discomfiture, disdain.

Break into joy ! he hears our vow, —  
Our God accepts us now.

Unfathomable are the ways  
Of Him, who watches from above ;  
He is beyond the creature's gaze,  
Though present to his love.  
His counsels lurk in thickest night,  
But thickest dark to him is light.  
The future leaves the seer behind ;  
The gazer on the stars is blind ;  
The magian's black enchantment flies ;  
The conqueror slays his slain, and dies ;  
But with His thoughts his actions run —  
God wills, and it is done.

In shades impenetrable hid,  
In darkness more than darkness dim,  
The deep paths of his mind forbid  
The starry cherubim.

Unseen, approachless, and alone,  
He sits upon his light-hid throne,  
And sees fond man presume on fate,  
With summer-swelling hopes elate ;  
He marks him in his proudest hour,  
Self-worshipt in his heart's high tower,  
Just clutching at a rainbow crown, —  
God sees and dashes down ——

Down falls, like some untimely birth,  
The ephemeral : his kneaded clod  
Resolved to water and to earth, —  
His soul before his God.  
But unimpeded in his path,  
And passionless in love or wrath,  
The Master-mind with steadfast pace  
Moves tranquil on ; and from his place,  
From light's remotest orb as far  
As from the earth the farthest star,  
At once inspects each glistening ball,  
And marks a sparrow fall.

He is our God: to him we raise  
Our chant of love, our hymn of praise;  
To him our white-hand gifts we bring;  
The independent King;  
The Life! the generating Sire;  
The One! the pure spiritual Fire;  
Who breathed, and every sphered Light  
Sprung from the bosom of the Night;  
Who now beholds our virgin-band,  
Nor scorns the offering of our hand;  
But makes his ancient race his care,  
And grants his people's prayer.

## MIRIAM.

Hail, Father! Mine the simple offering  
Of prayer and praise, which ever as the Morn  
Dances upon our hill-tops, or meek Eve  
Lets fall her dewy curtain on our groves,  
To thee I bring, twining the season's flowers,  
Or dancing to the harp and sweeter sound  
Of the glad voice of this dear sisterhood,—

Dear always, dearest then from concord true  
In this high privilege of naming thee.  
Be thou our guardian ; keep thy handmaids free  
From spots and stains o' the world men say is evil—  
Indeed, we know must be so ; else not now  
Would that uncivil Ammon vex our hearts,  
By doing despite to thy holy name.  
Hang over us the banner of thy love,  
And keep our bee-loved valleys and our tents,  
Our rivers and our brooks, sweet-smelling vineyards,  
Green pastures and the innocents that graze them ;  
And most the spots peculiar to thy love,  
Valley, or hill, or grove—if such there be,  
For all the earth is thine, and thou must love it—  
The honoured places where for ever dwells,  
Taught by thy presence, sanctimonious Fear ;  
Wherever thou with prophet, saint, or bard,  
Hast talked, or with the lowly heart communed,  
Grace freely given to the pure of heart and meek,  
But to all else denied : dear Father ! keep  
All that we cherish from the insulting foe ;

Bring safely back our brethren and the judge ;  
Assert thy reign, nor ever let lewd War  
With his abominable face affright  
Our peaceful homes : hear, Sov'ran Mercy ! now,  
As thou hast heretofore, to human sense  
Replying, or in vision or by voice ;  
For I have heard (oftener while yet a child  
Than of late years), though I did never see  
The soft, low, solemn Voice that spake to me.

## NURSE.

Well pleased am I, dear child ! that cheerful thou  
Lookest upon the morning, to the Highest  
Thy wonted duty paying ; blest the sire,  
Whose pious children call down blessings on him :  
Happy the mother was, the father is,  
Who calls thee child ; meek was thy infancy,  
Thy childhood lovely, and thy budding youth  
Is beautiful ; frown never on thy brow,  
Nor curling anger on thy red-ripe lip.  
Happy thy coming and thy going forth ;

Happy upon thy lids the flower-soft touch  
Of silvery slumber falls ; happy the light  
Peeps through the curtained fringes of thine eyes,  
Relieving sleep, sweet spirit of the night !  
Well do I think thou deemest of the day,  
And even now that to the battle goes,  
With like presage and augury of good,  
The leader and the troop of Gilead—  
So be it !

## MIRIAM.

Nurse and mother, both in one,  
Since she that bore me died before I knew her ;  
Praise is not good for youth, our elders say,  
And evermore the heart is prone to folly,  
And the quick ear, more than the rolling eye,  
Is avenue, whereby the Tempter steals  
On woman's weakness ; love, but praise me not :  
That I am meek, lowly, and dutiful,  
And am, like many others, reverent,  
Calls for our thanks to Him, who breathes on us



All that we have of good, and keeps from us  
Those foul suggestions which provoke to sin.

## NURSE.

But of the best and fairest of the land,  
Thou fairest ——

## MIRIAM.

Nay, I'll kiss thee into silence,  
And will not cease till thou dost promise me  
To tell some sweet and antique history  
Of fair Rebecca, or the tender-eyed  
Daughter of Laban, or of Joseph sold  
Into captivity ; how Hagar wept,  
And could not look upon her little one,  
To see him die, when suddenly a spring  
Of water gurgled up, and brought her hope,  
And in that hope life for her outcast boy,  
For 'twas the Lord who spake and pitied her ;  
How Pharaoh and his army in the sea  
Sunk, and the parted walls of waves fell down,

Through which the host of Israël just passed ;  
Or of my mother, since I never tire  
To hear of her, nor thou to talk of her.

## NURSE.

How like her mother grows my darling child !  
She was but few months older when she left  
Her father's homestead for thy father's arms.

## MIRIAM.

May I be like my mother in my life !  
Since all who knew her loved her ; whom to name  
Yet makes my father tremble ; whom all praise,  
And now thou weepest as we talk of her.  
I only recollect her in my dreams ;  
Then oft I see a pale face over me,  
And folded arms that open to embrace me,  
And sometimes feel a kiss upon my lips,  
A mother's kiss — but ever as the day  
Breathes light around my bed, the vision flies,  
And so I lose my mother, and I weep

Tears not unpleasant ; then I love thee more,  
Who did receive me from her dying arms,  
Vowing the vow, which thou so well hast kept,  
Of faith undying, wakeful care, and love.

## NURSE.

Yes ! she was good, and from her resting-place  
Breathe the sweet odours of an honoured name :  
She died yet young ; and in her dying hour  
She fondly hoped that the unconscious child,  
Whose cheek, close to her dying cheek, was wet,  
And who, with grief refusing to be stilled,  
Sobbed, though she knew not why,—might be the mould  
From whence should spring the great Deliverer,  
The promised, and the looked-for ; the Desire  
Of women, Prophet, King, and Lawgiver ;  
The Banner of our nation, and the Sword ;  
The Avenger on the Gentile ; Builder-up  
Of fanes and temples to the Great Unseen ;  
The Bruiser of the Evil One ; proclaimed  
Of bard and prophet ; and of whom to be

The mother hopes each girl of Israël,  
And in the high mood of her passionate  
Fond faith hopes on—till she believes in her  
The Consummation shall be, and for her  
The nuptial hour teems with the hope fulfilled.  
So may it be! thou, thou the honoured one!  
And soon as Jephtha comes, returning back,  
As we do hope and think, with victory,  
For thee the father will provide a spouse,  
In hope to take the warrior-boy—thy child,  
And his derived through thee, into his arms,  
And read the lines of greatness on his brow,  
And kiss him with a reverential love.

## MIRIAM.

To Heaven and to my father I commit  
That hopeful care. The Highest looks upon  
The daughters who do love him, and I leave  
My future to his loving providence;  
I am his handmaid—and his will be done!

## NURSE.

Yet, darling ! or I much misdeem, thy heart  
Has thought of marriage-song and bridal pomp ;  
Flowers and soft words ; harp, lute, and dulcimer ;  
Tears of the sisterhood, whose virgin life  
Has grown in sweet companionship with thine,  
From laughing eyes dropping on glowing cheeks,—  
The merry sadness, and the sudden gush  
Of fond affection, when the loved one goes  
To happiness, but goes to it from them ;  
Thy sire half-sad, half-cheerful ; and thy nurse —  
The dear old nurse, with whom thou aye hast slept,  
In loving sleep still growing to her side,—  
How the old fool will weep, and dash aside  
Her sullen tears, and kindle into smiles,  
Eloquent blessings, wishes, prayers, and vows !  
Then of that Celebration, which shall make  
The fairest Miriam a mother-nurse ——

## MIRIAM.

Have done, dear Nurse ! the prophet of our tribe,  
The good interpreter, but yesternight  
Bade me in secret try my inmost heart,  
And in sequestered meditation muse,  
And bend myself before the great Unseen,  
For that the hour of Preparation comes :  
I thought he spake of what thou talkest now ;  
Nor unprepared for womanly offices,  
When love makes duty pleasure, nor untaught  
In that high guerdon of a mother's faith,  
Which makes the daughters of our people glad  
When comes the nuptial hour, I willing heard,  
And went into myself : at first I thought  
Of our old histories, how Adam lay  
Unconscious and in preternatural sleep,  
In that blest garden, on a grassy bed  
Purfled with sweetest flowers, while murmuring by  
Euphrates rolled his happy-flowing stream,  
And overhead, in the far-stretching tree

That shaded him, the bird of Paradise  
Made music, speaking to his inward sense,  
To outward influence though shut not closed ;  
And that bright bird sang evermore of love,  
And new delights of home and fellowship,  
Immortal with Immortal, and a race  
Of precious promise and perpetual youth,  
Fair as the Shining Ones he waking saw ;  
And how the wondering sleeper then perceived  
One like himself growing from out his side,  
Who, as by some constraint of natural love,  
As loath to part, grew to his side again ;  
And how when he awoke, sudden, to touch  
Of the Unseen, he saw the woman near,  
And so Adam and Eve were man and wife.  
And then I thought of Abel and of Cain,  
And of his too-fair daughters, who seduced  
The sons of Seth to leave their father's tents,  
And worship idols ; how the Hebrew boy,  
Sold to the stranger, by God's counsel saved  
The race of promise ; of the weary house

Of bondage ; of our great deliverance thence ;  
The desert, and the pleasant land we have ;  
Rude Ammon in our fields ; my father hence  
To battle for us ; and I saw in all  
That God was over us, and bent me down ;  
And then methought I heard the voice — “ Prepare ! ”  
That only did it say ; but yet I feel  
That whatsoe’er He wills and does is right ;  
And so I am prepared.

NURSE.

I know, my child,  
Thou art as virgin in thy maiden thoughts,  
And free from sin, as mortal flesh may be ;  
Yet apt to love and marriage, not less apt  
Because thou art a white-hand Innocence.  
The sinful only deem, in fond conceit,  
Misdeeming much, that what is natural  
To thought and feeling should be kept concealed :  
Let them conceal their baseness, as they should,  
While we give voice to what we know is right.



The ordinance, by which He will work out  
His glory and our great deliverance,  
Must bring a blessing with it. Wedded love  
At once receives and gives true happiness.  
It loves to share each sorrow, and impart  
Each pleasure. It is drest with summer-smiles ;  
It only knows one object, the Beloved.  
It is both blest and blessing ; Sympathy,  
And chaste Affection, Concord, Faith, and Truth,  
Attend it as companions. In its train  
Move the domestic graces ; round it play  
The bright-winged thoughts that minister to hope ;  
And while the freshest airs of heaven creep round,  
Young buds of promise bless and sanction it.  
Methinks I see thee garlanded and drest ;  
Thy robe of spotless white ; thy glossy hair  
Twined with a wreath of newly gathered flowers ;  
The veil upon thy brow ; in thought I hear  
The burst of music and the tremulous voice  
Of that blest bridegroom call his Miriam ;  
While from the solitude of Preparation,

The light of meditation yet enthroned,  
Like Hope's own bow, upon thy even brow,  
Thou comest forth to be — a blessed wife.

## MIRIAM.

Yet shall I half regret my maiden life,  
Free, like the commoners of air and field,  
To gather flowers ; or else to sit me down,  
And listen to the sound of falling waters ;  
Or to pursue, when they in rapid flight  
Let loose their garments to the playful wind,  
These my sweet sisters ; or in musing lost,  
From some cloud-kissing hill to look upon  
The tents of Israël ; to think deep thoughts,  
And feel high mysteries — but know them not ;  
Or, when the virgin daughters of the land  
Keep holyday at solemn festival,  
To lead the choral song and joyful dance,  
Virgin mid virgins ; or with veiled face  
To listen to the prophet or the priest,

With assured trust ; and only taught to love  
The Care that keeps me, guides, protects, and saves.

NURSE.

Dearer delights await thee, and the cares  
Of wedded life bring with them their reward.

MIRIAM.

Happy so far — it suits not me to choose,  
But rather to accept what God designs.  
Now, Nurse, we'll go and dress my father's hall,  
And make our preparations for a feast,  
To welcome back my father and our judge :  
With timbrels and with dances will I go  
To meet the Captain, while upon his plume  
Triumph sits laughing ; gladly will he bring  
The light of peace to bless his Miriam.

*[Exeunt MIRIAM and NURSE.]*

## CHORUS.

When in his garden Adam walked along,  
Gazed at the birds, and heard their joyful song ;  
Marked all the tribes of living things pass by,  
And with their young joys pleased his royal eye ;  
Whence, mid those sights and sounds of quiet joy,  
Did some dim sense of want his thought annoy ?  
What was that blessed hermit's earliest dream,  
When first he slept by Pison's murmuring stream ?  
He slept and woke, and found his care removed ;  
He saw a softer Adam, and he loved.

Happy, thrice happy, those who move  
Along the whispering paths of love !  
In woody walk or alley green,  
Where light and shadow intervene ;  
Loitering oft in tangled nook,  
Or pausing by the water-brook ;  
How happier those, whose bridal hour  
Is blest by Jacob's guardian Power !

How happiest she, from whom shall spring  
Our long-appointed, promised King !

Soon from the war shall Gilead return,  
And mid our tents Sabea odours burn ;  
Soon shall we meet him with our virgin train,  
And bring the Captain to his home again ;  
Soon shall our sister veil her star-like eyes,  
And from her chamber come in bridal guise ;  
Joy ! joy ! the bridegroom hastes to claim his bride ;  
She comes ! she comes ! he may not be denied.  
With song and dance the marriage-feast we keep ;  
But then she leaves us, and her sisters weep.

Joy ! joy ! for Jephtha's only child,  
On whom her dying mother smiled ;  
In whom her widowed father lives ;  
To whom our God his blessing gives ;  
Her hero-sire, in victory's pride,  
Will place her by a hero's side.

Our song of joy the valley fills,  
And Echo tells it to the hills ;  
The sister, whom we love so well,  
Shall be a nurse in Israël.

*Enter ELDERS.*

But, lo ! our Elders come : we hear, good Adad !  
Jephtha will fight the Ammonite to-day,  
And that their battle is not far from hence ;  
Thou knowest Jephtha's purpose, — may we know ?  
We do not ask in fear ; for that we feel  
Our only Safety has been reconciled,  
And Gilead will fight beneath his banner.

ADAD.

In some three hours a swift-foot messenger  
Might reach us from the camp. Should Ammon's king  
Refuse to leave our fields he claims for his,  
Jephtha, methinks, this day will leave it to  
The God of battles ; rightly are ye taught,—  
The favour of His countenance is shewn,

Only withdrawn when headstrong Israël  
Provokes his wrath. Long-patient has he been ;  
And now our people turn again to Him,  
With whom is safety, though Philistia rage,  
Nile-watered Egypt, and the lands beyond ;  
They are not now, as when bold Ammon came ;  
Nor yet as when the mad Abimelech  
Distrest our nation, and they cowering shrunk  
From that bad man their lawless will advanced  
To dignity and proud pre-eminence.

## CHORUS.

Young though we be, we've heard when Gideon died,  
With years and honours full, our tribes relapsed  
To discord, idol-worship, anarchy ;  
And that Abimelech, his cruel son,  
Slew all his brethren, and raged terribly ;  
Undoing all his father wisely did,  
Dissolving compacts, holy rites profaning,  
Trampling on laws and customs—till at last  
He perished by a woman's feeble hand ;

When Tolah, of the tribe of Issachar,  
Was chosen leader, and he judged the land  
With equity ; and then the Gileadite,  
Peace-loving Jair, with wisdom ruled the tribes ;  
But at his death, the people once again  
Grew wanton from their long prosperity,  
Broke down the fences of our civil rights,  
Reviled the priests, and called their license law ;  
Whereon the Philistine and Ammonite  
Came on them, and invaded Gilead,  
And seized and keep Manasseh's heritage ;  
Whence, in their troubles they chose Jephtha judge :  
This is our present quarrel, is it not ?  
Which while we speak, perhaps, is being fought.

## ADAD.

'Tis even so, fair daughters of the land ;  
And it is well ye know that history,  
Which tells the woes of our revolted race ;  
But now the mighty Dread has been appeased,  
And Jephtha is assured of victory,



Or else he had removed your helplessness  
From impious Ammon's unsafe neighbourhood.

## CHORUS.

We fear not, father Adad ; for we prayed  
This morning with sweet Miriam, and sung  
A pleasant song, and felt that He was near us,  
And heard our singing. Was Abimelech  
A mighty warrior, like our present judge,  
Stately, and tall, and serious-sad, like him ?

## ADAD.

He was a cruel man, who forced himself  
To power and station, by the common tricks  
Which pass for wisdom with low-thoughted men.  
At first was humble-like, and veiled his pride  
In cunning cloak of liberal allowance  
For popular rights : Give me the rule, he said,  
And see how well it will be with you all :  
And they, like silly sheep, believed the wolf,  
And let the ravenous spoiler come within

Their fences, and he slew them. On a time,  
There was at Shechem a high festival,  
And a prodigious concourse gathered there  
From all the tribes; and thither Jotham came  
(Who only saved himself, by timely flight,  
Of Gideon's sons), and, sudden to their view,  
He stood upon the top of mount Gerizim,  
Which looks down upon Shechem; and he called  
With a loud voice, and all the people flocked  
To hear the words of Jotham; and he spake,  
As was his wont, to them in parable:—  
“ There was a time when all the trees did meet  
To regulate their sylvan government,  
And to choose one for ruler of them all.  
Whereon a great majority preferred  
The Fig-tree; but that modest tree declined  
The honour, thinking that true glory lay  
In bearing fruit; the Olive-tree and Vine  
Were next proposed, and each in turn refused,  
And for like reason, that pre-eminence.  
At length they asked the Bramble; who exclaimed,

If ye in earnest ask me, well content  
Am I to govern you, on this condition,  
That ye rest quietly beneath my shadow ;  
For if ye be refractory, a fire  
Shall go forth from me to consume you all. —  
Thus, men of Israël ! ye did indeed  
Forget great Gideon, your deliverer,  
And let Abimelech cut off his race,  
And tyrannise : ye are the silly trees,  
Abimelech the bramble with its fire.”  
And so it was, fair daughters ! for he raged,  
And overthrew their towns, and sprinkled salt  
Upon the ruins ; and with fire and sword .  
Destroyed the people. May the Mighty One  
Put wisdom in our hearts, to seek no king,  
But Him alone ; in faith still offering  
Simple obedience, never doubting Him,  
Nor leaning upon arm of flesh, which tried  
Is found but vain ; no sceptre, but a reed,  
Which, when we lean upon it, falls with us !

## SECOND ELDER.

But Jephtha is our Judge, our chosen one ;  
His rule will bring us, as we fondly hope,  
Peace and Prosperity, twin angels sent  
By our task-master to console our toils.  
I doubt not he is chosen instrument  
To save us from the vaunting Philistine,  
And saucy Ammonite ; His choice, who made  
And governs this his world ; in whose hand is  
The mystic chain, the linked harmony,  
That keeps in order all his universe,  
And in its own appointed track restrains  
Each gliding orb, that in the silent path  
Of boundless space, by him projected, wheels.

## CHORUS.

Or ever that the world was framed,  
Or in the star-eyed firmament  
The Regent of the Day was named ;  
Or from his treasury he lent

To the pale Queen of Night  
Her robe of softened light ;  
Or ever from the waters rose,  
Well-pleasing to the Maker's sight,  
The million wonders that compose  
This garden of delight ;  
Or that a shape of life was seen  
Amid this new-created green :  
To Him, who sits upon the throne,  
Was all our being known ;  
Unseen himself, though seeing all,  
Far off, yet ever near ;  
By Him the nations rise or fall,  
The God of Battles and our Sovran Fear.

Our generations come and go,  
With intermingled death and birth ;  
On Pleasure waits attendant Woe ;  
But still abides the living Earth.  
The ever-circling Sun  
For aye his course doth run ;

He rises and he hastes to rest ;  
Turns to the east, then turns him back,  
And journeys to the west,  
A southward or a northward track.  
The inconstant Wind is ever found  
Going his circuits round and round ;  
The Rivers run into the sea,  
That never overflows ;  
The Rivers to their source flow back again,  
Reflowing ever to the mighty main :  
But all the Wonders at their task that be,  
We know not, nor the highest creature knows —

He knows them all : his golden chain  
The universal system draws ;  
His creature-worlds confess his reign,  
And move obedient to his laws.  
Our fathers at his bidding fight ;  
They win by his prevailing might ;  
He crowns the warrior's toil ;  
He gives the battle-spoil ;

And now he goes before them,  
And hangs his banner o'er them !  
For them our prayers we breathe ;  
For them these garlands wreath ;  
For them the victim bind,  
His brow with flowery chaplets twined.  
Now, Father ! hear our voice,  
And bid our souls rejoice ;  
Send home our men again  
Safe from the battle-plain :  
That shawms and flutes may sound,  
While we in dance go round :  
And echoing hills to all our valleys tell,  
The Captain of the Lord has fought for Israël.

But see ! on yonder hill a runner comes,  
And now he dashes down the gentle slope ;  
'Tis Jared, fathers ! 'tis the messenger !  
The swiftest-foot of all the Gileadites,  
Save Zebul. He'll be here or e'er that one

Could tell again good Jotham's parable,  
Or sing the song of Miriam : he 's here !

*Enter JARED.*

ADAD.

What is thy news ? important, great it is,  
For fiery Expedition plumed thy course,  
Unflagging to the end : speak, Jared ! speak !  
Nay, poor, poor boy ! now sit thee gently down,  
Be patient till thy outspent breath recruits :  
For over-speed has quite o'er-mastered thee.  
See how the heavy drops pour from his hair !  
How wan he is ! with freshness from yon fount,  
Dipping a hyssop-branch, besprinkle him.  
His colour comes ! some water for his lips ;  
From the cool comfort he will soon revive.  
What loving zeal has not this poor boy shewn !  
God of our fathers ! bless him with ——



JARED.

They fight !

They fight !

CHORUS.

Who wins ? is Jephtha's banner up,  
Advanced into the thickest of the foes ?  
How was it ? is it ? will it be ? speak, Jared !

JARED.

They fight ! but what the issue will be, is,  
I know not : for the ruler stationed me  
Upon the hill-top, neighbouring his tent,  
And bade me, when I saw their battles join,  
To speed away, and tell our reverend elders.  
I saw the Philistine — the giant Chief —  
With mighty strides advance before his men,  
As though himself would trample down our host :  
I heard his dreadful shout ; and shout for shout  
Each of his impious swarm loud-bellowing sent ;

Upon the left injurious Ammon pressed,  
With steadier tramp, more orderly array.  
Their King was in the field. I heard the shock,  
And saw them shaken ; but I sped away,  
As Jephtha bade me, and from him announce,  
“ The Lord will fight for Israël to-day.”

## SECOND ELDER.

Went Gilead to battle, with the hope  
Of Jephtha ? did their brisk advance declare  
Recovered courage ? did they tread upon  
The bridges of the battle, as men sure  
Of their good cause, their leader, and themselves ?

## JARED.

Gilead was filled with joy, as drunk with wine ;  
And every man shewed high heroic thoughts  
In face, and step, and gesture ; every one  
Looked war and victory. I knelt to Jephtha,  
I prayed to him, and wept ; wept, prayed in vain,  
That he would not discharge me from the field :

The stern one smiled, and pointed to the hill,  
Unlovely and uncomfortable hill !  
And I must needs obey him, though to die  
For Jephtha, fighting with the Ammonite,  
Had more become a youth of Gilead.  
From that near hill I marked the onward waves  
Of bristling battle ; our impatient men  
Could scarcely be restrained ; but Jephtha stood,  
As looking on a pleasant spectacle  
Of harvest or of vintage — calmly stood,  
While onward, onward swept that dangerous surge.  
But all at once the mighty warrior gave  
Voice to his gesture, to his gesture life.  
He waved his hand and pointed to the foe,  
And only said (I heard him from my hill),  
“ Upon them, men ! the Lord is with us now ! ”  
I saw the great outburst of Gilead,  
And now am here to tell you ; speed me back.

## SECOND ELDER.

Be not so restless, boy, but stay thee here :

The battle will be done, the harvest reaped,  
Or ever you could reach the bloody field.  
Did Jephtha at the peep of earliest dawn  
Serry his ranks for battle, or once more  
Propound to Ammon terms of lasting peace?

•  
JARED.

He sent a herald even with the dawn,  
And asked the King of Ammon wherefore war,  
When peace invited him to gentler terms, —  
To leave our heritage, himself unshent.  
But Ammon laughed, and said the land was his, —  
A pleasant land he loved too much to leave,  
Of right derived from his great ancestors,  
Whom Egypt's bondmen, unprovoked, had spoiled.  
To whom the herald, by the judge foretaught  
Rejoinder apt to this expected plea,  
Made answer that his claim was nothing worth ;  
For if by conquest or prescription grew  
A title, then the land was Israël's,  
Who, when he fled from Egypt, found no friends,

But only foes ; yet, trusting in His might  
Whose will had made him bondman, for his sins,  
To cattle-worshippers, he won and kept  
Quiet possession for three hundred years,  
And by His favour still would keep his own,  
Deriving it as gift direct from God.

## SECOND ELDER.

What said the King of Ammon ? was he not  
Disposed to peace ? or did he scorn our Trust ?

## JARED.

He laughed more bitterly ; and bade him go,  
And tell tongue-doughty Jephtha that he long  
Had waited for the battle, and his gods  
Cherished his fortune ; he would keep his own ;  
And Israël must either quit or fight.

## ADAD.

The Ammonite, strong in his serried host,  
His horses, and his chariots, would despise

Our few compared with his. But our true strength  
Is, that we have no chariots and no horse ;  
For the great Captain aye will do us right,  
Whenever we in faith will call on Him. —  
But what said Jephtha ?

JARED.

Nothing he replied ;  
But in his inner tent he shut himself ;  
Nor lingered long ; and when he came from prayer,  
A radiant light was kindled in his eyes ;  
Then instant ran a rumour, he had seen  
The Glory, or the Captain of the host.  
All felt assured the victory was promised :  
He ordered me and Zebul to the hill ;  
Him to speed off whenever Ammon fled,  
Me when their battles joined. All that I know,  
Ye now know, fathers ; have I leave to go ?

ADAD.

Perverse one ! go ! Away, away he bounds,

Renewed in youthful strength ; but ere he reach  
The field he left, stern Ammon will have fought  
His latest fight — his doom be writ in blood.  
For swift in execution is the Lord,  
And terrible in vengeance ; when the blast  
Of wrath goes forth, it touches and it kills ;  
The strongest walls of cities crumble down ;  
The sword devours the mightiest multitude,  
Though clad in mail, and led by matchless skill  
Of warrior, victor in a hundred fights.  
I doubt me not that Jephtha's prayer was heard ;  
But fear me that the public joy will be  
Accompanied with wailing for himself.  
Perchance by self-devotion he will gain  
A lasting memory ; for he is one  
Of those rare spirits, who, from earliest life,  
Are marked for some mysterious destiny.  
Soon as he learned to think, he loved to roam  
Apart from men, and nursed in solitude  
His dreams of glory, and communion held  
With all the loftiest mysteries of thought.

I marked his childhood, when he dwelt at Tob,  
And saw his wildest moods: the boy was sad,  
But many thought he was not loved at home:  
The boy was wild and wayward; but I read  
Some signs, which to my thought prefigured him,  
In all his flights, beyond the common mark.  
He was as Ishmael in his father's house;  
It is no wonder that he fled away,  
And dwelt in solitudes; and soon we heard  
That some young robber, with a growing band,  
Wasted the Philistine. To Tob he came,  
And reigned a prince, where he was lately scorned:  
His band became an army, and his deeds  
Flew with the four winds. When some wild exploit  
Made pale the gentile mother, who was cursed  
By gentile lips but Jephtha? When the tribes  
Revolted from the faith, who only scorned  
To be at peace with Ammon? Only Jephtha!  
And when their burden grew too much to bear,  
Whom did the people choose in their distress  
For leader? Only Jephtha! Such the man.



## SECOND ELDER.

Whence grew that sadness, which we all observe  
To overcome him like a sullen cloud,  
Obscuring suddenly the clear bright blue  
Of a spring sky, e'en when he smiles upon  
His only child unutterable love ?

## ADAD.

'Tis sometimes seeming sorrow, when high Thought  
Usurps the mastery o'er noble minds,  
And takes away the sense of sights and sounds,  
And tasks the inner senses, — Consciousness ;  
Imagination, with her crowded world  
Of things here, there, past, present, and to come ;  
Faith, the revealer of the world unseen ;  
And Memory, which from the times foregone  
Snatches the precious wisdom of the wise,  
And makes the sepulchres of dead men yield  
Light for the living : Wisdom thus looks sad.  
For who is read in that grave mystery,

■

The human mind, with all its gushing rills  
Of passions and affections, thoughts and aims,  
Which stir the motives of the fleshly frame,  
And waken all the sense-strings of the man ;  
But he must needs in growing wise grow sad ?  
This wisdom Jephtha has ; chastised by grief,  
For public failures, and from private loss,  
The wise man, judge, and widower, is sad.

## SECOND ELDER.

And widowed long : methinks it had been well  
To find a mother for his Miriam.

## ADAD.

He wived, and happily. How did he tend,  
With all a husband's love and father's hope,  
The lovely flower, from which the promised bud,  
Yet growing, was to blossom and to bloom !  
She bore a woman-child ; and so for him  
The promise was not, though he hoped from him  
It might be yet derived. She left him lone,

(Save that her child renewed his Miriam,)  
Too sadly taught to try experiments  
In woman's fondness for a child not her's,  
And at a hearth round which her newer growth  
And dearer blooms. His father had a wife,  
Who was to him no mother ; and he loved  
The little fondling innocent too much  
To risk her comfort. Though he hopes in her  
To keep his race, I doubt me he will grieve  
To part with her ; yet, from the war returned,  
He'll choose for her a husband from his tribe.

## SECOND ELDER.

His choice not made, will he keep festival,  
And let the maiden please her heart — or eye ?

## ADAD.

She loves as he loves, nor will she dispute  
His best and bravest is the bravest, best,  
And beautifullest. But whoe'er this day  
Of all our youth strikes crowned Ammon down,

(If his own arm achieve it not), or gains  
Mightiest renown for daring hardihood,  
Is like to win the loveliest Miriam,  
Guerdon and garland of his high desert.

## SECOND ELDER.

This fig-tree lends to us a pleasant shade,  
Or else the generous heat that makes to swell  
The corn's white pulp, and brings upon the grape  
Its darkening colour, would oppress our age.  
E'en Jephtha will be wearied with his arms,  
Nor loath to quit his harness : let us in ;  
Soon will our homesteads ring and ring again,  
When Zebul comes announcing victory.

[*Exeunt* ELDERS.]

## CHORUS.

The Guardian sits above !  
No tyrant, to affright and slay,  
And scare our gentle doves away ;

He comforts every heart that grieves ;  
Who leave him, only those he leaves.

For Heaven itself is love !  
The rose-dews of the early morn,  
Mid which the light of love is born,  
Are diamonded by many suns,  
To light the homes of Shining Ones !

Yes ! love is all in all !  
The birds, that welcome in the spring,  
Express it ever as they sing ;  
It is the life of Seraphim,  
And the austerer Cherubim.

In adoration fall !  
Centre of all the worlds that move,  
And trace round Him their paths of love,  
The Sun and Mover of the whole  
Breathes peace into the mourner's soul.

Too high, too high the theme !  
We know not yet what we shall be ;  
But this we know, that we shall see,  
Who are his own, by covenant sealed,  
The glory of the Lord revealed.

But vain is Ammon's dream !  
The thief has like a recreant fled ;  
The boaster is discomfited ;  
He flies ! he flies, with barren brow !  
And why ? Our God is with us now.

But see ! the beauty of our valleys,  
The apple of our eye, comes forth :  
The light of joy is on her brow,  
And yet she pauses in her step. —  
Fleet as the roe young Miriam,  
Than any stock-dove gentler far ;  
On either eyelid, dropping light,  
The dew of Morning sits ;  
Her song excels the singing-bird's ;

She is our Bird of Paradise.  
For what more loving, lovely creature  
Steps in beauty on the earth ?  
Her gentle presence would not scare  
The playful bird upon the lawn,  
Nor the mother-waiting fawn.  
So fair, so sweet and innocent,  
She were a fitting bride for man  
• As yet untarnished by defeature,  
Who yet had every thing to lose, —  
A queen of beauty for an Eden bower.  
She marks us not ; or else would come,  
And let her sisters share her thoughts.  
It may be that she hears a voice  
We cannot hear :  
Or that her mind is lighted up  
By some winged minister,  
To her inner eye revealing  
The shadow of the Wonderful :  
Whate'er it be, though rapt, she is not sad ;  
And now she comes.

## MIRIAM.

Dear sisters ! even now the fight is won,  
Ammon discomfited and trampled down !  
I feel like some blest creature, that enjoys  
Our privilege of thought, and is not shut  
Up in the body, which is sepulchre  
To that which only keeps it sweet, the soul,  
Immortal in a mortal prison pent !  
I feel as one might do with power instinct  
Of free and disembodied Consciousness,  
Who sails upon the wafture of a breath  
Of purest Air, and sees, with keenest sense,  
The peoples of the various elements ;  
Or insect polities ; well-ordered states,  
Which swarm the hills and valleys of a leaf ;  
Admiring in the least, as in the vast,  
The wisdom of the great Ineffable ;  
Or else, upon the extreme skirt of Space,  
To mark some new sun, newly made and moved,  
With his dependencies ; or else to hear



Angelic harpings on the mystic Mount,  
Where, curtained in his solemn glory, sits  
The Architect; while, ever and anon,  
The brightness is subdued to roseate hues  
Of winning softness, that who wait and look  
May in that melting gush of tender light  
Behold the loving shadow of His presence !  
For now I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And at the latter day will stand upon  
The earth ; and though the worm consume this body,  
Yet shall I see Him. Sisters ! hear the Voice  
Of Wisdom speaking by a sister's lips.  
We are immortal ! and the Woman's seed  
Shall bruise the Serpent's head ! we look to Him,  
In faith prospective ; Champion of the Seed  
Of Jacob, he will scatter down our foes,  
And burn them up like stubble ! Yet again  
I heard the soft Voice whisper me, " Prepare !"  
Favoured of women ! must I not rejoice,  
Companions of my childhood ? Yes ! He comes !  
I see a ~~face~~ but I cannot see

That loveliest Incarnation ; yet I think  
That I shall see Him, an anointed king,  
The King ! the Son of Man ! the Wonderful !  
Enthroned and diademed !

## CHORUS.

Dear Miriam !

See ! her bright visage is becoming pale,  
O'erclouded from the parting of the Light  
That burned in her ; her senses are in swoon,  
After high-wrought excitement : lay her down,  
Gently and tenderly, upon this slope  
Of odorous herb and flower, till she recover  
From this oppression : surely has her speech  
Been of the future, an apocalypse  
Shewn by the Spirit, which has o'ermastered her.  
We never yet have seen our sister thus :  
It was of bridal and triumphant love  
She spake in vision ; doubtless she will be  
A favoured one, perhaps the favoured one,  
The mother of our Hope, the promised King !

Over her cheek, transparent, now returns  
The glow of animation : as a child,  
Nestling and pillowed on its mother's arm,  
Sleeps quietly ; and ever, in its dream,  
Smiles, as some pleasant thought makes music for  
Its comfortable sleep, — our sister lies,  
As if in sleep and in the land of dreams !  
Exquisite Miriam ! sweet harmony  
Of gentlest spirit and of loveliest shape !  
She stirs — and from the fringes of her eyes  
The dewy star-light, which they shaded, shines :  
She wakens up. — How is it with thee, sister ?

## MIRIAM.

Methought I was among you, and I saw  
Strange sights and beautiful, and heard a voice  
More soft and sweet than aught I ever heard  
Of bird, or sighing air, or human tone,  
Address me as His chosen ; and I told  
My sisters what I saw and heard, in part ;  
And then I thought I was diffused in sleep,

And in my dream saw, heard the same, and more ;  
And, lo ! I wake me up, and see you round me,  
Each with a friendly bunch of odorous green,  
As ye were fanning me while yet I slept  
And saw bright visions. I remember me ;  
My good nurse and myself did busy us  
With house appointments ; she with cates and viands ;  
While I with choice of fruits and freshest flowers  
Twined garlands, and set off my father's hall  
To best advantage : when, this done, I went  
Into my chamber, and was comforted  
With shadowy glimpses of some brighter joy,  
That made my heart glad, though I read it not.  
Kind sisters ! have ye never known, asleep  
Or waking, when the spirit is between  
Two worlds, the seen and the invisible,  
And longs to be at liberty in that,  
But is by strong constraint chained down to this,  
Yet on the confines of that glorious world  
Hovers, and looks upon the goodly scene,  
Surpassing Palestine, as Palestine

All of Earth's regions, where the skies look love,  
And Shining Ones scatter the dew of peace,  
And every city sparkles with the hues  
Of many-coloured brightness, and the gates  
Stand open, and the King's high pursuivant  
Proclaims with trumpet-tone, distinct and clear,  
" Come in ! come in ! the King holds festival ! "  
Have ye not known the spirit then dragged down  
E'en as a bird that wanton boys have fettered  
But with a length of string, just as it thought  
To fly away — away, and be at rest ?

## CHORUS.

We have not felt, but we can fancy this :  
'Tis even as when Moses, from the top  
Of Pisgah, looked from lofty Nebo down  
Upon the lands of Gilead and Dan,  
Ephraim, Manasseh, Naphtali, and Judah,  
To the far limit of the outmost sea ;  
And saw the south, the ripe and gushing vale  
Of Jericho, the city of the plain

Of palm-trees, far as Zoar ; with his eyes,  
He saw the land of promise ; but might not  
Go over thither. When an envious cloud  
O'erhangs the hills, and will nor melt nor pass,  
But hides the bright face of the glorious day,  
We try in vain to look beyond and through it ;  
And then a heaviness comes over us.  
And such a cloud shuts out that brighter world  
Thy dream was of, when we would look on it :  
We never, never see it — not in dreams !

## MIRIAM.

Just such a cloud has hidden from my view  
What I in vision or in dream beheld ;  
And now 'tis like the shadowy Indistinct,  
Moving or resting on a mountain-crest,  
Not opening into forms and images,  
Which late we saw, but now are mingled up  
In strange confusion ; and while yet we look,  
The misty mass itself has passed away,  
And forth the mountain-head peers nakedly !

Thus, sweet-hearts ! has my soul's dimmed mirror lost  
The glorious images which then I saw :  
But I am happy still, for ye are here.  
Has Zebul come ? — not yet ? Look, look ! behold  
Him yonder ! think ye not he runs like Zebul ?

## CHORUS.

'Tis Zebul ! like a courier of the air,  
Or roebuck in his hour of vigorous speed,  
He comes amain. It is a glorious thing  
To look upon — a beautiful young man !  
His limbs thrown out at top of exercise,  
When in the race he bounds and leaps away ;  
Or in the festive dance he graceful moves ;  
Or wakens music from the reed or harp ;  
Or listens to the Elders modestly ;  
Or plies the pleasant labours of the field,  
Or sings among his sheep ; or whispering breathes  
Love to the lovely — always beautiful !

## MIRIAM.

True ; but the face of Eld more glorious shews,  
When what the cheek has lost of full and fair,  
It more than gains from stamp of thought severe,  
And energised by mind, and shining with  
Light from the inner lamp, and touched withal  
By passing hues of immortality,  
More bright and frequent as the flesh more yields  
To that which underworks it, and the glad soul  
Feels that its prison-house is crumbling down :  
Looking on such a face of such a man,  
We half forget the saint is yet in flesh.

*Enter ZEBUL.*

Well, Zebul, is my father near ? how near ?  
I ask not of the battle ; for I know  
That Ammon, like a jocund wassailer,  
Came to the conflict, and has had his dream.



ZEBUL.

Ammon is down, and Jephtha will be here  
With his best speed. I left him in full chase,  
He and his captains, of the rabble rout ; —  
It was a glorious show, and every man ——

MIRIAM.

Call forth our Elders ; lead old Adad forth :  
Here, sisters ! when the judge, my father, comes ——  
Nay, we will meet him — he will soon be here —  
With timbrels and with dances. But my nurse  
Must hear our tidings.

[Exit MIRIAM.]

CHORUS.

Like a shape of light,  
She has departed ; here our Elders come,  
Preventing us.

ADAD.

Quick, Zebul ! tell us all !  
Ammon is vanquished, and the Philistine  
Is gathered by the Reaper ? is it so ?  
But, Jephtha ! is the mighty Captain safe ?

ZEBUL.

Ammon has fought, and lost the prize he fought for,  
And paid for forfeit his insulting life ;  
The Philistine will never vaunt again  
At Gaza of his deeds in Gilead :  
Jephtha is safe ; he played the captain's part  
Victoriously, heroically :  
He discrowned proud Ammon ;  
From his brow he tore the diadem ;  
He trampled it ; and where the Angel led,  
He trod their mighty down ;  
They fled away ; but what is flight of man,  
When Wrath is in the field ?  
As to the sickle falls the corn,

The Philistine and Ammonite  
Fell before Gilead : as a whirlwind,  
Irresistible, o'erthrows a stately tower —  
Even as the walls of Jericho  
Fell at the trumpet's blast,  
They fell.

## SECOND ELDER.

The overthrow entire, and safe  
The leader ! 'tis a mighty victory.  
The Lord is with his people ! His the praise !  
Our eighteen years of servitude are gone,  
And we are free !

## ADAD.

Redeemed Israel  
Shall sit beneath his fig-tree and his vine ;  
The tabor and the harp again be heard ;  
The daughters of our tribes again be seen  
At solemn festival : Ammon is gone !  
The insulting Philistine no more shall claim

Tribute nor worship ; with lewd look no more  
Shall they bring shame to matron or to virgin —  
The uncircumcised dogs ! I spit on them !  
Corruption is their bed-mate, and the worm  
Wanton shall dally with their dainty flesh !

## SECOND ELDER.

Tell us, if thou dost know, in more detail  
The several circumstances of the fight.

## ZEBUL.

Fight it was none, unless it be to fight  
Where Conquest is on one side ; hideous Rout,  
Disaster, and Dismay, upon the other.  
Jared would tell you how their battles joined —  
(I met him half-way hence, running as though  
The Avenger was behind him, and he fled  
For Refuge ; but I told him, as I run,  
That all was over ; and he fell, as shot,  
Sudden, by arrow-point ; sank down and wept.)  
For me it now remains to tell events,

Big with our fortunes, fleet as words that tell them !  
There was a mighty sound of rushing war ;  
Neighing of horses ; roll of chariot-wheels ;  
Clangour of arms ; a roar immense of shouts.  
The hills reverberated to the shock ;  
The heavens in startled replication pealed ;  
The echoing earth rang to the fearful rush ;  
The armies shocked ! Then overcame them first  
A pall of showery darkness ; then a flash  
Of light, flash upon flash ! Earth trembling reeled ;  
The nations were subdued ; their hearts were low —  
Low as the ground their corpses lie upon !  
Then Jephtha shouted, " Lord ! we follow thee !"  
Our people shouted, " Lord ! we follow thee !"  
The leader struck the King of Ammon down ;  
Each shepherd was a hero ; husbandman,  
And beardless boy, pursued the work of death.  
Their horses and their chariots saved them not ;  
They perished ; Arnon never more shall see  
Their braveries. Few out of many fled ;  
I left our people busy in pursuit.

## SECOND ELDER.

Was the great Angel present to the sight  
Of friend and foeman ?

## ZEBUL.

Him I did not see.  
But Jephtha shouted, " Lord ! we follow thee !"  
Our people shouted, " Lord ! we follow thee !"  
Foe felt His presence ; Jacob knew Him there ;  
The thunder-cloud of Wrath burst over them :  
The Lord our God is great, and we have peace !  
I leave you now for rest — sweet after toil !

[*Exit.*

## ADAD.

The Judge will soon be here ; for he will haste  
To see his daughter and revisit home —  
How pleasant home, when one has been abroad !  
How passing pleasant after battle-toil !  
For the unhuman deafening din of arms,

The hideous crash, the curses and the groans,  
The bloody profanation of green earth,—  
To taste the quiet of the peaceful fields,  
The dropping down of water from the rock,  
The hum of bees and sounds of rural life ;  
The cordial welcome and the fond embrace  
Of friends and family ; to lie upon  
Our own familiar bed, and see again  
Familiar faces, human, or the creatures  
Tamed to our hands, dependents on our care !  
How dear to him, who comes to be enrolled  
A Worthy of his country !

## SECOND ELDER.

Let us forth  
To meet our Jephtha ; though our age soon tires,  
With slow steps we may reach yon gentle slope ;  
And if he will not stay to talk with us,  
We may at least change greeting.

ADAD.

Let us go :

For though we are not of his house, we love  
His person, while we venerate the Judge.  
A moment will he linger at the hill,  
And look down on his home ; a moment only ;  
For then the father will surprise the chief,  
And he will only think of Miriam,  
His bud of beauty and his pearl of price !

*[Exeunt.]*

CHORUS.

The Lord, whose power exceeds the scan  
Of angel, and the praise of man ;  
He is my Strength, Salvation, and my Song ;  
To Him dominion, honour, praise belong :  
To Him, who maketh Israël rejoice,  
Our God, our fathers' God — to Him I raise my voice.



Great is the Lord ! let this attest  
Proud Egypt's bravest and her best ;  
Down in the sea, while yet with anger drunk,  
Down like a stone the horse and rider sunk ;  
They rushed to battle, and they found a grave,  
Dashed down and overwhelmed, beneath the red-sea  
wave.

The waters stood on either side,  
A fiery Pillar Jacob's guide.  
“ We will pursue ! ” exclaimed the blinded foe —  
“ Pursue and spoil ! ” Onward they rushed ; but, lo !  
A mighty ocean crushed them in their pride ;  
The world of waters fell — their host of warriors died.

By Thee, most Highest ! Egypt fell ;  
The ruin none survived to tell ;  
Dead in an instant, of their proud array  
No trace remains : for many a weary day  
Her anxious eyes did Pharaoh's mother strain  
For him, she never more might look upon again.

Lord ! while we tremble and adore,  
Sorrow and Fear shall go before  
Our Leader's banner. Planted by thy hand,  
Jacob shall flourish in his pleasant land,  
And Edom's dukes and Moab's chiefs shall flee,  
And Canaan's tribes surcease, dissolved away by Thee.

Most Highest ! in the battle-strife,  
What foe can touch at Jacob's life ?  
On Thee the Chief shall call in battle-hour ;  
On Thee the maiden in her modest bower ;  
To Thee all glory, praise, and homage be —  
Our Harvest-God in peace, in war our Panoply.

Hark ! distant voices, and the rush of feet !  
Look to the water-brook, along the track  
Arched with the long and leafy colonnade,  
Whose branches overhang the murmuring stream,  
And interlacing meet over the water,  
Where from the hill-side bends the nearest road ; —

The gleam of warriors! 'tis the Judge himself;  
And now he leaves his train, and rushes on!

*Enter NURSE and MIRIAM.*

MIRIAM.

Why, sisters! thus intent? it is my father!  
With timbrels and with dances will we meet him:  
Come! let him hear us, maids of Gilead!  
A song for Jephtha! Dances, garlands, hymns!

CHORUS.

Strike the harp! strike the harp!  
In honour of Jephtha,  
The hero we love,  
Who has rescued his people.  
He went to the battle!  
He went and he conquered,  
And now he is here!

The maidens of Judah  
Shall sing to his glory ;  
The Prophet and Priest  
Shall remember his story ;  
The minstrel shall sing it,  
And Jephtha the Judge  
Be renowned for ever !

Proud Ammon came on,  
But he went not again !  
The Philistine raged,  
And the Philistine lies  
A morsel for vultures,  
A spoil for the dogs,  
On Gilead's plain !

The triumph is won,  
And the Chieftain is ours,  
We dance and we sing  
For Manasseh restored,  
For Gilead free,

In honour of Jephtha,  
The glorious Judge !

*[JEPHTHA enters hastily; his Daughter rushes forward to embrace him; he at first clasps her tenderly, then suddenly shakes her off, and seems overcome with horror.]*

MIRIAM.

My father! What! no answer for thy child —  
Nor yet a look! Why has my lord withdrawn  
His favour from his handmaid? Oh, my father!  
It was not thus, my father! we have met,  
After a short, short absence from thy home,  
When thy own Miriam still flew to thee,  
But never, never was repulsed as now.  
One word! one look! one smile! to tell thy child,  
Thy only one, she has not lost her father. —  
I kneel to thee, nor will I leave thy knees  
Till thou dost answer me: tears! tears from Jephtha!  
And on his home-return from victory! —  
I can no more; speak, father! by my mother,

The sainted memory, whose child I am,  
Speak to me, even if it be in anger.

JEPHTHA.

My daughter ! thou hast brought me very low,  
And thou art one of them that trouble me.

MIRIAM.

How, whence, my father ? never in my thought  
Have I offended thee — what can it be ?  
Thou tremblest, and the champion of our tribes  
Melts into sorrow, and the strong man weeps,  
High Jephtha sobs : dear, dearest father, speak !  
The grief, that is imparted, is less bitter, —  
Have I offended thee ?

JEPHTHA.

My precious child !  
Thou hast not ; but the bitterness of death  
Is on me ; yet, perhaps, will pass away.  
Time wears out sorrow, or the sorrowful :

I'll tell it thee anon — not yet — not now.

MIRIAM.

I saw thee come along with rapid step,  
And when I clung to thee, I felt thy clasp  
Returning my affection, strong as death —

JEPHTHA.

As death! The dead return no more to bless  
The living hearts which hive their memories.

MIRIAM.

Thou thinkest of my mother —

JEPHTHA.

Of her daughter —  
Her only one, my only one, my child.

MIRIAM.

And what of me? why didst thou start away,  
And shrink from me, as though a grisly form

Of unclean spirit, darting from a tomb, .  
Had clutched thee? why didst shun thy Miriam?  
Why didst thou shake me off, as thing unclean  
Had touched thee, impious, abominable?  
Why didst thou fear to look on what thou lovest?

## JEPHTHA.

Lovest! I think no mother more can love  
The new-born Life that from her bosom draws  
The sincere milk; heart-lightening Innocence!  
That knows not, cannot know, the world of love  
That mother-bosom, yearning, cherishes.  
Thou wert my treasury of mighty loves,  
And hopes too lofty — but His will be done!  
He gives and takes away. Thou hast to go  
A journey; Jephtha and his child must part—

## MIRIAM.

It will not be for long, nor far, dear father?



## JEPHTHA.

'Tis very distant, yet is very near ;  
The time of meeting may be soon — or never.  
Not so ! the loving hearts that intertwine,  
Though parted for a time must re-unite,  
Revivified in that immortal clime,  
Where Sorrow comes not ; and re-flourishing  
In ageless youth and undecaying life,  
Shall no more suffer anguish, fear, divorce :  
At least the faithful should believe there is  
This better being — immortality  
Of love : — dost think to see and know thy mother ?

## MIRIAM.

I trust so, since I see her in my dreams ;  
And if we are renewed, as we believe,  
In true life, when this dreamy one is past,  
Our good dreams here are there realities.  
But yet I understand thee not ; thy voice

Not often speaks in riddles ; plain thy speech  
To all, and most to me : speak out, dear father !

## JEPHTHA.

When I went thither, and the Ammonite  
With mighty forces threatened Gilead,  
My thought was of my child ; not all my thought ; —  
The people, and the obscure future writ  
In changing characters I could not read ;  
The battle-chances ; our offended Dread,  
Who makes the wisest calculations chance  
To the fore-casting schemer ; but distinct  
Only to Him his present-future shews ; —  
The father and the judge, the chief and man,  
Were troubled in my bosom ; and I prayed —  
The load was taken from my anxious heart,  
And I felt hope, and in that kindling hope  
Was Victory. The Spirit came upon me,  
And by His teaching I went forth to meet  
The sons of Ammon, nothing doubting Him,  
Whose balance weighs the nations. Then I vowed

A vow: "If Thou wilt, without fail, deliver  
Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be,  
That whatsoever cometh first to meet me  
Out of my doors, when I return in peace,  
Shall surely be the Lord's; burnt-offering  
I'll offer it." The vow was ratified;  
The prayer was granted; must the vow be kept?

MIRIAM.

Thou knowest, Jephtha! Judge of Israël!  
There is no going back from vows to Him,  
And thou the last to make such forfeiture.

JEPHTHA.

'Tis even so; there is no going back.  
We smote the sons of Ammon, and, behold!  
No living thing did meet me from my doors  
Before thee; thou, thou only art my vow.

MIRIAM.

My father! thou hast spoken to the Lord;

Now do to me according to thy vow ;  
For He hath taken vengeance of thy foes,  
Even of Ammon for thee : be it so !

## JEPHTHA.

High-hearted woman ! girl of Gilead !  
The judge declares thee signed and consecrate,  
Devoted for thy people ; but the father feels  
The victim is his child — his only one !  
Yet I resist not ; for His will is right.  
My child ! my beautiful ! my Miriam !  
My hope of hopes ! mine own and only one !

## MIRIAM.

My father ! I am well content to die  
For thee and Gilead. But let me go,  
Till two moons wane, and then thy vow be paid ;  
I and my fellows to go up and down  
Upon the mountains, my virginity  
Bewailing ; since for me that promise is not.

## JEPHTHA.

It shall be so, my daughter ! my sweet child !  
And thou must die, die in thy virgin prime ;  
Unknown the chaste communion of true love,  
The conjugal caress ; on thee no child,  
No man-child born into the world, shall smile,  
And stretch his little arms to thy embrace,  
And draw, with dimpled cheek, from thy chaste bosom  
Nature's sweet unadulterate aliment.  
No troop of virgins shall, with loving hands,  
Link a fond circle round thee, on the day  
Of Celebration ; wreaths, nor coronal,  
Shall twine thy hair and strew thy onward path —  
Mine own ! my only ! and my beautiful !

## MIRIAM.

Father ! I pray thee grieve not ; for the bride  
Of His election, daughter of his love,  
Must not go to Him grieving ; though no boy,  
No princely boy, thy daughter's first-born child,

No little Jephtha shall repay thy love, —  
I am not childless: when in Palestine  
A daughter of our people doeth well,  
In thought of Miriam, she is my child ;  
When, taught by my example, any man  
Does well and lives in faith, he is my son.

## JEPHTHA.

Like a lopt branch that never yet bore fruit,  
Thou fallest on the ground : the fig will bloom ;  
The vine will grow, and give as heretofore  
Its rich ripe clusters ; lilies and roses make  
Earth fragrant ; fountains murmur as before,  
Summer and Spring will come and pass away ;  
But thou no more shalt listen to the song  
Of singing birds ; Autumn and Winter crown  
And strip the rolling year — and thou not know it !  
My incompatible, unfruitful child !

## MIRIAM.

Thy child unfruitful, incompatible !

The father of the faithful did not call  
His Isaac so ; nor will my father deem  
His daughter is unfruitful in her faith :  
I grieve not that I am burnt-offering.  
Content thee, father ! Shall the righteous Judge  
Be to his Judge unrighteous ? creature call  
The great Creator to a controversy ?  
Then let it be a willing sacrifice.  
And I, as one betrothed, will try myself  
In maiden meditation ; then will come  
Forth to the people, in a bridal dress,  
And garlanded, for them and thee true victim ;  
A holy love upon my cheek and brow,  
Smiles on my lip, and gladness in mine eye ;  
For such I feel the grace vouchsafed to me.  
Is it a small thing to be consecrate,  
Devoted to the Lord ? to die for thee,  
My father, for my people, and my loved,  
The nursing mothers and their little ones,  
The young men and the maids of Israël ?  
Though happy here, I seek a better home,

A levelier life, and happier happiness.  
Thy blessing, father !

## JEPHTHA.

When thy mother gave  
Thee newly born into mine arms, she said,  
Here is a blessing for thee from the Lord ;  
And it was so : to me thy life has been  
Blessing and comfort ; and to Israël  
Thou art a blessing ; to the latest times  
Thy happy memory shall be preserved ;  
And it shall be a solemn ordinance,  
The daughters of our people yearly go,  
For four days every year, from year to year,  
To commune with the daughter of the Judge,  
Jephtha the Gileadite : lo ! thou art blest !

## MIRIAM.

Sisters ! we with the early morn will seek  
The hills where we have wandered oft in sport ;  
d think ye only bring me on the way



To pleasant gardens and delicious airs :  
The passage thither dismal to the sense  
Of mortal apprehension ; but there comes  
A light upon my soul, which from that dark  
Takes all its horrors. It becomes not us,  
The children of his ever-wakeful love,  
To murmur at His counsels. What He wills  
Is ever right. He opens and he shuts  
The life-spring of his creatures ; at His voice  
The mountains quake ; His breath awakes the flowers.  
He takes the life he gives ; but in my soul  
There lives a nature which can never die.  
Have we not talked with Him upon the hills  
In pleasant hymns ? Have we not often felt  
The shadow of his Presence over us ?  
Mere mortal could not with Immortal hold  
Communion ; nor could shape to thought and hope  
Hereafter-being. We shall meet again,  
Dear sisters ! feel it, and be comforted.  
Commiserable Nurse ! mine own kind Nurse !  
My very mother, in thy love at least,

Thou seest it must be so. Dumb and confounded  
By this most strange, unlooked-for providence !  
Thou too be comforted. Think that I go  
The certain way thou too must travel soon ;  
And when we meet, what joy will then be thine !  
Come, father ! come ; for thou must tell me all  
Thy late adventures, and must smile again,  
And with thy kiss call on thy God to bless me,  
Thy God and mine ; the Judge of all the earth  
Must needs do right. His will be done !

JEPHTHA.

Amen !

[*Exeunt JEPHTHA and MIRIAM.*]

CHORUS.

Alas ! best sister, must thou go from us,  
That dreaded and uncomfortable way ;  
Nor ever more at morn shall we wake up  
Our darling, when the bright-faced Day-star shews  
His glowing cheek, making the East one blush ;

Nor shall we crown our beautiful with flowers,  
Nor mid the lilies sit with her and sing ;  
Nor in the running water bathe with her,  
Sheltered with veil of overhanging green,  
The maiden grotto and the sylvan shade,  
Where virgin Fear and Modesty keep watch :  
Nor ever more, like roes, run to the hills,  
And gather fruits ; and hear the sweet birds talk ;  
And tell us stories of the olden time ;  
And weary us with pastime ; looking for  
Honey amid the rocks ; or singing to  
The whispering Airs ; or circling in the dance, —  
A happy sisterhood — No more ! no more !

## NURSE.

Where lately sat the green-throat singing-bird,  
The raven sits ; where late the stock-dove coo'd,  
The green is withered, and the bird is dead ;  
The boding owl her watch-note hoarsely shrieks  
In Beauty's chamber ; silent is the lute ;  
The voice is silent, which once breathed for us

Its living music ; for the song the dirge ;  
The marriage-coronals entwine the dead ;  
Darkness for light ; ashes and dust for life ——  
My child ! my singing-bird ! my tender dove !  
My beauty, music, light, and life ! — my child !

## CHORUS.

With firmer step the Warrior goes,  
And Sire and Daughter are agreed,  
When two waning moons shall close  
The Virgin's lustral Preparation  
For the soul to quit its shell,  
The Victor-victim then must bleed  
For the safety of her nation —  
A holocaust for Israël.

Amid the smoke of sacrifice,  
And odours breathing thence  
Of every precious spice,  
Her Spirit with the mantle dight  
(Although her body die)

Of new-recovered innocence,  
Shall soar on silvery plumes of light —  
A disembodied Liberty.

## NURSE.

My child ! whose child I shall not see,  
Nor ever lull it on my knee ;  
I thought to dress thy bridal bed,  
And, lo ! my beautiful is dead !  
My darling one ! my sweetest love !  
My pretty silver-winged dove !  
Thou never more shalt sing for me, —  
I never more may fondle thee.  
Thy smile did like a sunbeam fall  
On me, on these, on all ;  
But thou art gone — and I am left,  
Of thee — of thee bereft.

## CHORUS.

It is a pleasant thing  
To look upon the sun ;

To hear the people sing,  
Who build their nests upon  
The trees of Palestine.

To see her is sweeter ; —  
And sweeter is her song,  
When the maidens greet her,  
The lily-beds among,  
Or underneath the vine.

She is fair as the Moon,  
And is clear as the Sun ; —  
No dove-mate is kinder ; —  
At morning and at noon,  
And when the day has run,  
We seek, but cannot find her.

NURSE.

Let the sycamore stoop,  
And the lily-bed droop,

The roses cease springing,  
The birds hush their singing ;  
My glory has departed,  
And I am broken-hearted.

## CHORUS.

Our glory has gone,  
And we are alone  
With Grief and with Sorrow ;  
She went with the Night,  
That never knew light,  
Nor brought forth a morrow.

## NURSE.

Who is it that fears  
For the joy of my years ?  
Though Death, the dread Reaper !  
May crop, he can't keep her.  
For she will arise  
To her home in the skies,

As the dove that loves best  
Still returns to her nest.

## CHORUS.

Again it is joy !  
For we see the returning  
Of life to our dearest,  
Where comes no annoy,  
Nor the darkness of mourning,  
But bliss the sincerest.

## NURSE.

My child ! my child ! my playful bird,  
That never from my presence stirred,  
Except at morn to skir the mountain,  
To sip the dew, or taste the water  
In sparkles gushing from the fountain ;  
My pretty, playful, precious daughter !



## CHORUS.

My sister ! darling of mine eyes !  
Whom I shall never more surprise,  
Soft stealing on thy lone communing  
With flowers and birds, or hymn repeating  
To pious echoes round, or tuning  
Thy soft clear voice to words of greeting.

## NURSE.

A flower cut down ! a life repealed !

## CHORUS.

A spring shut up ! a fountain sealed !

## NURSE.

The flower, cut down, will bloom no more ;  
Nor life repealed is given again ——

## CHORUS.

Nor fountain sealed will trickle o'er,  
Nor spring shut up, the pining plain.

NURSE.

A victim-lamb she dies for all,  
Accepted in her nation's stead——

CHORUS.

My robe is rent, my tears fast fall,  
My heart is dark,—my lovely dead !

NURSE.

On Carmel's reverend head  
There sits a heavy cloud ;  
The cowering birds shrink from their dread ;  
The thunder-voice is loud.  
It came and it went ;  
The tempest is spent !  
On the cedar sits Peace,  
And the birds never cease  
Their singing and mirth ;  
And each on his bough  
Cries Hail ! to the now  
Of his beautiful earth.

At Jephtha's hearth sits Desolation ;  
And Sorrow weeps beside his gate ;  
While bleeding Love, in sequestration,  
Droops speechless, and disconsolate.  
But the cloud will drop rain,  
And the light be seen ;  
And the heart have again  
Its world of green :—  
Who holds the waters in His hand,  
Will guide us through the dreary land  
Of Darkness, darken as it will ;  
Our life is only what he makes ;  
He loves the daughter whom he takes ;  
He loves us still.  
The vaunting Ammonite  
Would do us foul despite—  
He dies ! our liberty is won ;  
She dies ! His will in all be done !

CHORUS.

Take up a lamentation !

Wo ! wo is me for her !

Where is a Comforter —

The cup of Consolation ?

NURSE.

He that gave again hath taken ;

Blest is He in all his ways !

For my child again shall waken,

And for ever sing his praise.

Then away with all sorrow,

Till ye come to the fountains

That water the valleys,

Till ye come to the mountains.

But I will go to her,

And talk to her smiling,

While she listens to me,

Or whispers, beguiling

The thrill of my pain,  
Words soft as the dew,  
With kisses as true  
As the breathing of Light  
On the sweet flower-cup,  
Yet in slumber shut up.  
For if I should weep,  
My child could not sleep ;  
And if for to-night  
My heart will restrain  
The gush of its sorrow —  
It may break on the morrow.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS.

No voice of weeping now !  
No wailing dirge express  
The grief our bosom fills,  
While we attend our Vow,  
In her devotedness,  
To the redeemed hills ;

Till we with joyous chant,  
And Victory's loud acclaim,  
Reach with our Nazarite  
The cedar-shaded haunt,  
That long shall bear her name —  
Our glory and delight !

With earnest speed his daughter rushed to meet  
The glorious Chief, and sank down at his feet :  
Love in her dove-like eyes, and debonair,  
With virgin roses in her flowing hair,  
The maiden met her warrior-sire,  
And spake what love might best inspire ;  
And on her lofty brow shone woman's pride  
For man's achievements, to her sex denied,  
When to son, father, husband, is decreed  
For patriot battle-toil the hero's meed.

And she was his only one !  
He had no other child,  
Nor girl nor boy had he ;

On her, on her alone,  
His only one, he smiled —  
His home's sole charm was she.

But when his feet before  
The father saw his daughter,  
His pride of triumph fled ;  
His garments straight he tore ;  
He saw her dight for slaughter —  
A victim garlanded.

“ My daughter ! thou hast brought me very low ;  
To thee, my joy ! my present grief I owe ;  
For by my vow my darling now must bleed,  
That living thing devote for Jacob freed.  
Alas ! alas ! my daughter !  
Whom I have doomed to slaughter !  
My heart may break ; my purpose may not falter ;  
Thou art the Lord's — to bleed upon his altar.”  
The floodgate of his grief would not be kept ;  
He bent — he bowed upon her neck — and wept !

But she, the noble lady !  
Was not disheartened ;  
She feared, she fainted not :  
“ My father ! I am ready —  
I give my votive head,  
Nor mourn it is my lot.

If thou hast made a vow,  
That vow must needs be kept —  
I will not hinder thee ;  
For low is Ammon now ;  
Their sleep thy foes have slept,  
And thine the victory ——

I am the Lord's, who, father ! fought for thee,  
That living thing devote for Jacob free :  
But let me, father ! to the mountains go,  
Till two moons wane, to wail my woman's wo,  
Not for my death, but that I die  
In profitless virginity ; —



I and my fellows to bewail and weep,  
That on my bosom I must never keep  
A man-child — never to my fond heart tell,  
This is, perhaps, the Hope of Israël."

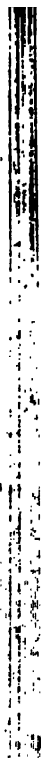
Thus to the hills will we  
With our soul's darling go,  
With her to wail and weep ;  
But now no wail must be,  
And now no tears must flow,  
Till we have reached the steep.

For to the Lord of all  
Our pomp is dedicate,  
That leads the victim on ;  
Two months our tears shall fall,  
As early drops and late  
Of dewy Lebanon.

Then shall the virgin-victim forth be led ;  
Then shall our darling's precious blood be she

While songs of triumph shall acclaim the skies,  
And in the air Sabeian odours rise ;  
But never shall her praises cease,  
Whose blood is shed for Jacob's peace :  
The daughters of our tribes shall yearly go  
To mourn for her — four days their tears shall flow,  
To mourn the virgin-girl, who virgin died,  
To give our people peace, and quench fierce Ammon's  
pride.

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**NOTES.**



11-1-11

## NOTES.

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Page 8, line 10.

*The very grass enjoys the morwening.*

THIS is the old English form for "morning:" it occurs several times in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and I think ought to be restored to our poetry.

Page 8, line 19.

• *For, lo! the winter it is past, and gone.*

The reader will perceive that I have taken this description of Spring from Solomon's Song.

Page 10, line 3.

*Unfathomable are the ways.*

In the magnificent opening chorus of the "Supplices," Æschylus has given a sublime description of the Sovran Power, from which I have derived some parts of this chorus.

*Διὸς ἱμερος οὐκ εὐθέητος ἐτύχθη.*

Page 11, line 17.

*From light's remotest orb as far.*

We are lost in the contemplation of the immensity of the universe. It is not probable that the telescope of the astronomer has enabled him to perceive all the starry worlds. In the infinite space still deepening on, with instruments of higher power, artificial and natural, if such might be, he would probably discover more and more traces of the handiwork of the Architect. The mind of man cannot conceive a habitation for the Sun of His system, the great Centre of the universe. "I will give you an orange," said the excellent Fenelon to a boy in one of his parochial class-examinations—"I will give you an orange if you can tell me where God is." "I will give you two," said the boy, "if you will tell me where He is not."

"No one," says Professor Whewell, "who has dwelt on the thought of a Universal Creator and Preserver, will be surprised to find the conviction forced upon the mind by every new train of speculation, that, viewed in reference to Him, our space is a point, our time a moment, our millions a handful, our permanence a quick decay."

Page 14, line 9.

——— *though I did never see*

*The soft, low, solemn Voice that spake to me.*

“ And I turned to see the Voice that spake with me.”

*Rev. i. 12.*

Page 22, line 1.

——— *the bird of Paradise*

*Made music.*

The gorgeous bird that now goes under this name is not a singing bird. That of Paradise, the bird of birds, must have been most musical, by whatever name called by the original name-giver, while he was yet in his life-garden.

Page 25, line 5.

*Free, like the commoners of air and field.*

“ The birds that live i' the field  
On the wild benefit of nature, live  
Happier than we ; for they may choose their mates,  
And carol their sweet pleasures to the Spring.”

*WEBSTER'S Duchess of Malf.*

This fine old poet has at last been brought within the reach of the general reader by Mr. Dyce, whose labours in honour of our neglected dramatists are worthy of all commendation. I hope he will do the same good turn to Beaumont and Fletcher ; of whose works there is not yet a good edition.



## Page 33, line 12.

*There was a time when all the trees did meet.*

This parable is recorded in the book of Judges (ix. 7—20). The Greeks claimed the invention of fables, which, however, were in familiar use among the Orientals, and especially the Hebrews, long before the light of civilisation travelled towards Greece. This fable of Jotham is also related by Josephus (*Ant. lib. v. cap. 9*).

## Page 34, line 12.

*And overthrew their towns, and sprinkled salt  
Upon the ruins.*

This not unusual mark of detestation, in those times and countries, seems to have been a mode of execration. Some persons have fancifully imagined it was to render the places, sprinkled with salt, really barren. There could be no object of this kind in so sprinkling the ruins of towns and cities. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. The custom probably originated in the natural thought associated with that awful sign, that salt typified abomination. The execrable are not the least ready at the curse and the anathema. I conceive that it was an emphatic imprecation of barrenness and poverty, conveying a wish that the country might become salt and barren; and that it was not done with the view of effecting that barrenness by the action itself.

Page 35, line 14.

*Or ever that the world was framed.*

“ One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually; and the wind returneth according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.”

*Ecclesiastes, chap. i.*

Page 38, line 11.

*That shawms and flutes may sound.*

“ With trumpets also and shawms, oh, shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.”

*Psalm xcvi. ver. 7.*

Page 41, line 10.

*The bridges of the battle.*

This is a Homeric expression, signifying the space between the two conflicting armies, about to join battle, on which they move backwards and forwards, press and are pressed, pursue and fly.

Page 53, line 17.

*On either eyelid, dropping light,*

*The dew of Morning sits.*

“ By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like  
the eyelids of the Morning.” *Job, xli. 18.*

Page 55, line 13.

*Or insect polities ; well-ordered states,*

*Which swarm the hills and valleys of a leaf.*

“ It has been well observed, that about the same time when the invention of the telescope shewed us there might be myriads of other worlds claiming the Creator’s care ; the invention of the microscope proved to us that there were in our own world myriads of creatures, before unknown, which this care was preserving.” . . . “ It appeared, that in the leaf and in the bud, in solids and in fluids, animals existed, hitherto unsuspected ; the apparently dead masses and blank spaces of the world were found to swarm with life.”

*WHEWELL’S Bridgewater Treatise.*

Page 56, line 8.

*For now I know that my Redeemer lives.*

This passage from Job has been said by some to be the only one in the Hebrew Scriptures indicative of a belief in

the resurrection. I think otherwise. We may see traces of this belief throughout, not in the direct assertion of it, but in allusions which are traceable to it, in the customs of the people, and in the careful burial of their dead.—The doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons being mentioned together, is no where asserted in the Christian Scriptures, excepting in St. Matthew and the First Epistle of St. John; though this doctrine is the leading article of the Christian churches, the very key-stone of their faith. Thus the doctrines of the resurrection and a glorious immortality may have been the common persuasion of the sons of Abraham, though not expressly stated in their writings.—The great sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees were at issue on this very point; as the great body of Christendom is at this day at issue with the Unitarians on the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. The book of Job is of an antiquity that baffles speculation; but the passage I have transcribed is not there recorded as any thing directly revealed; and therefore may have been believed by many before. “And he said, Son of man, can these dry bones live? And I answered, Lord God, thou knowest;” was a question which, if now put, under similar circumstances, must be similarly answered.—With what body he is to be raised, no man could possibly, of himself, discover: the identity of the individual would not be lost from any changes in his former tabernacle; any more than the identity of a youth, who, if he lives thirty or forty years, physiology teaches us, will not have a particle remaining of

his original frame-work, of bones, muscles, membranes, and sense-strings compact. We at last come to the conclusion, that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." I see no reason for believing that the Jews did not hold these comfortable doctrines; but I see every reason for believing that they did; and I have no doubt that they had a prospective faith, however much they may have been mistaken as to His person and offices, in the great Deliverer, even as the Christians have a retrospective faith.

The Children of the Dispersion, however, are yet happily looking forward, while Christendom looks backward, only backward — while events foretold by the prophets of old are in the womb of Time, and only just not born. It is written, however, that the peculiar people shall be again restored to their pleasant lands, and be included in a new covenant; when all of them shall know Him from the least to the greatest. And what is writ, is writ.

Page 69, line 12.

*How pleasant home, when one has been abroad!*

"O quid solutis est beatius curis?  
Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino  
Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,  
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto."

CATULLUS.

Page 83, line 15.

*My virginity*

*Bewailing ; since for me that promise is not.*

The high and spiritual privileges attached to primogeniture among the Jews; the pride of their nationality; their careful exclusion by their lawgiver from fellowship with the rest of mankind, and especially from intermarriages with those who were not of the seed of Jacob; their impatience for a king, and their sin in renouncing the direct government of the Theocrat when they prayed to him for a viceregal deputy; their hopes and their ambition; their schemes and their wishes; their vows and their prayers; their religion and their polity—all originated in and pointed to that particular promise, which was to be fulfilled in the person of the Desire of women. In the earlier times this hope was naturally shared alike by all the tribes, and continued to be cherished by all even after it was expressly declared that the tribe of Judah was selected for this especial honour.

Page 91, line 13.

*A holocaust for Israel.*

“ So Virtue, given for lost,  
Deprest and overthrown, as seem'd  
Like that self-begotten bird  
In the Arabian woods embost,  
That no second knows nor third,  
And lay erewhile a holocaust,  
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,  
Revives, reffourishes, then vigorous most  
When most unactive deem'd;  
And though her body die, her fame survives  
A secular bird, ages of lives.”

*Samson Agonistes.*

THE END.

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